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Via ECFS
Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

**Re: In the Matter of Petition of USTelecom for Forbearance Pursuant to
47 U.S.C. Section 160(c); WC Docket No. 18-141; Category 1**

Dear FCC,

I decided to switch from being a life-long loyal customer to AT&T (starting with my Mother's pride in having worked for the phone company in the 1940s before she married), when friends recommended I look into alternate phone and internet providers for better customer service. I had grown increasingly more tired of AT&T adds and claims about how they treat me as a "loyal" customer, while I saw deterioration in their customer service. The market had always seemed tightly controlled between Comcast and AT&T in my area (prices nearly identical after either option's complex promotions run out in a month or two after switching).

Despite poor customer service, AT&T had excellent technical reliability I could depend on. However, I switched to a small company this past year based on friends' accounts of similar level of technical reliability for a much faster internet connection (5G fiber) at only a few dollars more a month for comparable service.

Here is the competitive edge advantages to my new choice (largely because I gave up on AT&T ever making changes to achieve the customer service benefits I itemize below:

[1] SIMPLICITY -- My monthly bill is now very simple for combined phone and internet. Its a single dollar amount (including tax) that will not change by nickles and dimes or dollars each month due to excessive details of the inner-workings of pricing and fees. AT&T bills have so many fussy details to back-up the passed on costs to the customer, making it easy for AT&T to add new picky things as line items, further confusing the customer. AT&T was never able to tell me my monthly dollar amount (tax included) that would be that same number every month for my 2-month contract!

[2] ACCESS TO SUPPORT -- My new provider has one phone number for support and I do not expect that phone number to change ever 6 to 9 months like AT&T did to me. AT&T was so large, their representatives often did not know how to transfer my call, once I even obtained a live person. They had so many programs and promotions, it seemed arbitrary what I might negotiate with them each time I called about an odd amount on my total phone bill. AT&T always fixed things my way in the end, but only after much time wasted on my end by phone calls to get what I needed. Now, with my new provider, I rarely need to call for a support question and its never about unexpected price changes or switches in bureaucratic departments and phone numbers.

[3] **INTERNET SPEED** -- Another reason I switched from AT&T is that they did not know when I would have access to 5G and at what price. I now have renters in my house and both frequent work from home for their employment. One is a small business owner, who runs her business from her bedroom! They need reliable speed and connectivity. They have Apple computers and can receive the full benefit of the high speed 5G fiber (for nearly the same price I had paid for AT&T slower speed). AT&T does not know when and how much they will charge for providing equivalent service in the future.

[4] **TV CABLE ACCESS** -- I tried several AT&T cable providers (part of bundled packages to reduce overall monthly bill to AT&T). While they provided excellent reliable cable access to many channels, AT&T was unable to negotiate or provide lower costs by my personalizing my own channel line up for the few things I actually watch. By dropping cable all together, I have found streaming options that now work at my house with the new provider because of the higher speed and capacity to serve 3-5 independent computers streaming at night in our house!

[5] **OLDER AGE CUSTOMER SERVICE** -- AT&T was particularly bad at providing customer support to older folks like me or my mother-in-law. WE need basic services and do not need being bombarded with new technologies and complex billing and features advertisements. I tried to follow up on some of them, only to learn that AT&T tech support could not explain them very well to older people who are less tech savvy. However, my new provider was able to help me set up a special temporary streaming service for World Cup Soccer, despite this not being something their company was actually providing. They took the extra time to explain to this tech dinosaur the few extra steps I needed to understand. That is a major competitive edge to attract me -- and it was only one phone number and quick response by email!

[6] **ROBO CALL PROTECTION** -- We have phone with our new internet provider, and they automatically provide a very effective screening protection against Robo calls **FREE OF CHARGE!** AT&T with all its political and financial muscle actually charged for increasing call blocking and call screening service features above a paltry minimum. I can hardly believe that they couldn't waive such extra fees for me (one their most loyal customers over a life-time) let alone simply create the technology to address this national problem of robo calls as part of their basic pricing package (like my current small provider does!).

[7] **CONTRACTS** -- While many friends did not like 1 or 2 year contracts, I saw a benefit. I understood them to be fixed prices for loyalty. I didn't mind paying a little extra if I did not have to be continually shopping, like my friends, for slight better deals. I need the option of being able to budget to a fixed dollar amount and not think about it or options. I want simplicity. However, AT&T contracts always seemed to include little extras and price changes month to month. I think AT&T should absorb such minutia into a single fixed price and not confuse me with such detail unless I ask for all the items. For such a very large company to be nickle dime fanatics is unbelievable. However, with my current provider, I can budget and not have to think about all those details if I don't want to.

[8] **ANTI-MONOPOLY** -- Competition is good for all. It allows startups to introduce new technology and services that might improve the quality of life and pursuit of happiness. It can cause large companies to change for the better and then offer part of the increased cost savings back to customers as well, even if it is primarily quality of service. A potential danger in monopoly behavior is price fixing and gouging by collusion between the largest providers who are basically charging nearly identical amounts as the bottom line despite the wasteful and bewildering advertising campaigns to distinguish themselves from their colluding competitors (think Comcast v. AT&T in my neighborhood -- the third powerhouse is excluded by all three carving up the territories?) by confusing promotions and offers for variations on support features like number of

channels or phone services or speeds for a price. Why is internet and phone so much better in many European countries I have visited?!

Thank you for your close attention.
Please keep competition healthy in our country.

Joseph Healy